

Human Resources Committee

25 May 2022

Present: Mrs J James (Deputy Chair in the Chair)
Councillor Mrs D Clements, Dr R Heath-Davies, Councillor PJ Morgan and Councillor S Yelland.

[Councillor M James arrived during consideration of the report, however as he was experiencing technical difficulties, the Deputy Chair remained in the Chair.]

(Virtual meeting: 10.00 a.m. – 12.05 p.m.)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor ML Evans, Mr GA Jones and Councillor A Wilcox.

2. Disclosures of interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021 were presented for confirmation and authentication.

One Member asked whether there were minutes for the meeting held on 6th April 2022 when the staff structure had been presented. The Chief Executive replied that as this was a Workshop, rather than a Committee meeting, no minutes had been taken.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021 be confirmed and authenticated.

4. Exclusion of the Public

It was **resolved** that the public be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, would be disclosed.

(Dr R Heath-Davies also tendered her apologies and left the meeting during the debate on the following item.)

5. Organisational Restructure

Members were reminded that, at the last meeting of the Committee, they had asked to be kept abreast of progress in respect of the organisational restructure. The report before them therefore reminded them of the Authority's original proposals for restructure, outlined the collective and



individual consultation with staff that had taken place, set out the amendments being considered to the original proposal as a result of the staff consultation and sought approval to implement those revised proposals, which had been given full consideration by the Senior Leadership Team. It was noted that there were one or two areas where further work was necessary, and a decision on these would be sought at a future meeting. An outline was also provided on how the proposed structure would be integrated into the operational day-to-day work of the Authority. Appended to the report was a schedule of comments made by staff on the proposals, together with officer's draft response.

The Chair thanked officers for providing a balanced report, which showed evidence of the Authority's care and courtesy to staff. One Member noted that the number of people reporting directly to the Chief Executive remained unchanged and questioned whether an additional Director had been considered. The Chief Executive replied that this was not considered financially viable. The future composition of the Authority's Leadership Team was also questioned, as it was not immediately obvious whether those reporting directly to the Chief Executive would form part of that Team. The Chief Executive advised that he was happy that the appropriate staff reported directly to him, and clarified that the Leadership Team would consist of himself, the two Directors and the Heads of Finance, Communications & Marketing, People & Governance, Nature Recovery, Regenerative Tourism, Decarbonisation, Engagement & Inclusion and Placemaking.

Some concern was also expressed that information on the revised structure had been shared with the HR Committee only, rather than the wider NPA Membership. The importance of clear and timely communication with staff was also emphasised. The Chief Executive replied that all Members were invited to the April workshop when the proposals were outlined, and once the new structure was clearer, they would receive further communication. However decisions on staffing matters were delegated to the HR Committee.

Members also sought assurance that the proposed structure would be financially sustainable going forward. The Finance Manager, speaking as the Authority's Section 151 Officer, confirmed that the Authority was currently in a strong financial position with a high level of reserves, and that in the medium term the additional costs were affordable. The Chief Executive added that the proposed structure would position the Authority to take advantage of opportunities to generate additional income going forward, and that there would be an expectation on the new Heads of Department to do so. Members asked to be provided with a cost profile for salaries, pensions, etc over 3-5 years and to receive regular updates on this during the next couple of years.



Some Members sympathised with concerns expressed by staff regarding the impact of the proposed pay and grading review. The Chief Executive noted that this was a separate exercise to the restructure, and the HR Manager explained that in similar exercises it is often likely that 95% of staff salaries remain the same as a result of the review. However, a small number might increase or be reduced; and the latter would be subject to the Authority's Pay Protection Policy

It was **resolved** that:

- a) Appointment of five new "Head of" posts – Nature Recovery, Regenerative Tourism, Engagement & Inclusion, Placemaking and Decarbonisation – be approved. Appointment to the Head of Engagement & Inclusion would be ringfenced internally for two members of staff subject to the change proposals.
- b) The structure of the Nature Recovery department be approved.
- c) The structure of the Regenerative Tourism department be approved.
- d) The structure of the Decarbonisation department and recruitment of a GIS Officer be approved. The Decarbonisation Officer role would be considered once the "Head of" function had been appointed.
- e) The structure of the Engagement and Inclusion department be approved at the top level, except for Health & Wellbeing, to provide certainty to the two managers impacted by the change programme and the Ranger and Education teams.
- f) Recruitment of an Assistant Accountant (0.5) to sit in the Finance department be approved.
- g) The role of Health and Safety and Training officer be approved, as well as moving of the Volunteer Co-ordinator role to HR or People and Governance department
- h) Changes to the Placemaking department be delegated to the Chief Executive subject to the outcome of the second consultation with staff